

**59th CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS**

*Cebu, Philippines
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**AGENDA ITEM 7: AVIATION AND ENVIRONMENT
BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION THROUGH NATURE-BASED
SOLUTIONS**

Presented by Philippines
INFORMATION PAPER

SUMMARY

Mactan Cebu International Airport is committed to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity in the southern part of the Philippines, as well as the preservation of the natural environment which is the habitat of various kinds of life forms. This commitment is translated to various programs and priorities of Mactan Cebu International Airport such as the Coastal Clean-up Project, Tree planting, reduction of carbon emission, banning of single-use plastics, solid waste segregation, proper disposal of hazardous wastes, and compliance with national environmental laws. These nature-based solutions to biodiversity conservation are made possible through the collective efforts of members of the aviation industry.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION THROUGH NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Biodiversity, or the variety of all lifeforms in our ecosystems, is an important advocacy of the aviation sector in the Philippines. Being a country that is a natural display of biodiversity, the Philippine aviation industry is involved in sustainable practices in order to maintain its rich natural environment.

1.2 In Mactan Cebu alone, a diverse combination of bird species exists which is enhanced by the presence of Olango Wildlife sanctuary. The avian biodiversity in Olango Wildlife, the first Philippine wetland of international importance, witnesses a wide array of species of migratory birds which find their home in Olango Island, an island proximately situated around the area of Mactan Cebu International Airport.

1.3 Mactan Cebu International Airport is thus committed to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity in the southern part of the Philippines, as well as the preservation of the natural environment which is the habitat of various kinds of life forms. This commitment is aligned to ICAO's commitment to Environmental protection as concretized by Annex 16 and supported by various documents, guidelines, and reports.

1.4 This commitment is translated to various programs and priorities of Mactan Cebu International Airport such as the Coastal Clean-up Project, Tree planting, reduction of carbon emission, banning of single-use plastics, solid waste segregation, proper disposal of hazardous wastes, and compliance with national environmental laws.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Coastal Clean-up Project

The project of the MCIA at the surrounding and nearby coastal areas of the airport is consistent with its unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship, championing support to the diverse avian biodiversity of Olango Wildlife sanctuary, recognizing its important role in conserving the existence and transformation of various ecosystems - habitats like forests, marshes and grasslands which store carbon, keep the climate stable, oxygenate the air and transform pollutants into nutrients.

The project encompasses a range of activities, including:

- Removal of marine debris and restoration of coastal reef;
- Awareness and education and close community involvement;
- Engaging stakeholders to ensure continuous conduct of survey and inventory of various avian population, foraging or roosting the area;
- Engage partners in enforcement of environmental rules and regulations
- Consultation with authorities on its implications to eco-tourism and livelihood.
- Identifying and protecting endangered species and enforcement of rules and regulations conserving the area;
- Protect the livelihood of the affected coastal communities:

The cleanup also allows various mangrove species, sea-grass, algae echinoderms, crustacean, corals and other coastal and marine life to flourish which directly benefits the avian biodiversity.

The project engages participation of the affected local communities considering MCIA'S genuine concern to their livelihood, including sustainable fishing and eco-tourism which its socio-economic benefit placed consideration that the aforementioned positive effects could prevent storm surges, debris-flowback, reduce aquatic coliform protecting conserving, restoring safer seafood, seawater environment. Education and awareness bids to inculcate increased appreciation among the coastal communities on now to sustain a safer, healthier, aesthetically appealing coastal and marine environment. The project likewise ensures regulatory authorities enforcement against wildlife-trafficking.

This project was recently recognized by the international airport community and was awarded the Platinum Award by Airports Council International.

2.2 Tree Planting

MCIA is dedicated to sustainability and environmental protection through its annual tree planting activity within the island and province where it is located. Thousands of seedlings and mangrove propagules have been planted by airport employees in strategic areas of the province as part of the national program to replace illegally cut trees and as a demonstration of the aviation sector in its commitment to address climate change challenges and environmental threats.

Just for the year 2024 alone, 1000 mangrove propagules were planted in Olango Island by the airport employees as part of its thrust to take care of the environment, promote biodiversity, address climate change challenges, and contribute to sustainability of sea life forms.

2.3 Carbon Emissions Reduction

ICAO Member states adopted a collective long-term global aspiration goal (LTAG) of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Mactan Cebu International Airport is fully onboard in this noble goal. Following actions have been instituted to make this goal possible:

- Single engine taxi operations
- Installation of Bridge mounted equipment
- A transition to electric vehicles for ground equipment
- Preventive maintenance of all emission source such as generator sets.

Ongoing plans are being formulated to address the grass cuts waste dur to grass cutting activities in the airside.

The current initiatives have been recognized by Airport Council International Level 1 for Airport Carbon Accreditation. Programs are underway to proceed to Level 2 od the same accreditation.

2.5 Banning of Sing-Use Plastics

Single-use plastics such as drinking straws have been banned in the terminal building and were replaced with the use of paper straws. This contributed to the decrease of non-biodegradable waste generated by passengers in the terminal building.

2.6 Waste Management and Compliance with National Environmental Laws

A strict implementation of solid waste segregation is also implemented in all airport areas especially terminal buildings and other offices. Hazardous wastes such as busted lights, used batteries, and used oil are collected and stored in a designated waste area where they are collected by regulatory-accredited waste transporters and treaters.

The airport has a working environmental committee that establishes, implements, and monitors environmental programs of the airport. Most of all, the committee ensures that the airport complies with all national and local environmental compliances, permits, and licenses

3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

3.1 The Conference is invited to note the information contained in this Paper.

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